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Name of Journal: Nursing Standard

Book Title: HynoBirthing: The breakthrough approach to safer, easier, comfortable birthing

Author: Marie Mongan

Publisher: Souvenir Press Ltd

Edition: 4th

No of pages 336

ISBN 98780285643352

Star Rating ***

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Criticisms of the medicalisation of maternity care and unnecessary intervention in childbirth are fairly common with the promotion of a more women centred and holistic approach to childbirth now fairly well established in the UK.

HynoBirthing: The breakthrough approach to safer, easier, comfortable birthing is, in part, a critique of the medicalisation of childbirth. The author suggests that the pain women experience in childbirth is primarily due to medical socialisation and fear - women have been taught to disregard their own natural instinct and give birth within a medical model of care. Historical and other evidence is provided to support this. The author promotes HypnoBirthing as an alternate paradigm to the medical model and promotes a philosophy of childbirth where women can achieve a more instinctive and natural experience.

The book does not discuss the technicalities of hypnosis, or how it might work in any great detail, other than to say that hypnosis is a natural every day state that most people experience, for example, when day dreaming or immersed in a movie. The author explains that hypnosis is a process which brings mind and body into harmony through education [for example, knowledge of the physiology of childbirth], relaxation, breathing and visualisation. The importance of exercise, nutrition, and selection of birth care providers are also emphasised.

Primarily, this is a self-help book for pregnant women or for those planning a pregnancy and who want a more holistic and less interventionist birthing experience. However, the book would also be of help to those providing care to women during pregnancy or in helping them prepare for a more relaxed and natural birth. The book is comprehensive and well-written drawing on personal experiences and case scenarios and would be a worthwhile addition to any library which supports the education of midwives, obstetricians or GPs.